

SEVEN STEPS TO JOINING FAIR

1. Create a coalition of faculty members

Find a group of five to six faculty members who are willing to join you in asking that a vote on joining FAIR be placed on your faculty meeting schedule. Try to get a group of “unlikely bedfellows” – not just the usual suspects.

2. Ask for a meeting with your dean

The best way to get a positive vote on joining FAIR is to make sure all your proper school procedures have been followed – and that the dean feels he or she has been kept apprised of all faculty efforts. No one likes surprises – especially deans. Either the entire group of 5-6 people you’ve assembled, or just a few representatives of the group (you all know what will work better with your respective deans) – should ask for a meeting with the dean to discuss the effort to join FAIR.

3. Have a vote on FAIR scheduled for a faculty meeting in the fall.

A law school faculty joins FAIR when a majority of its members vote to take such action. You might request that a vote on FAIR membership be included on the agenda for an already-scheduled faculty meeting or that a special meeting be called for the purpose of addressing the question.

4. Send out an email to all your colleagues, signed by your group of 5-6 unlikely bedfellows, explaining the positive aspects of joining FAIR and asking for their support.

You will find on www.solomonresponse.org a number of template documents that will make your organizing job easier. For example, the website has a [template email](#) that your group of 5-6 members can send out explaining the importance of joining FAIR and asking for the support of your colleagues.

The website also has a [brief description](#) of *FAIR v. Rumsfeld*, the lawsuit filed by FAIR to challenge the constitutionality of the Solomon Amendment, that can be attached to your email.

5. “Walk the halls” to get a sense of your colleagues’ questions and concerns prior to the faculty meeting.

It is very useful to get a sense of the particular concerns your colleagues may have before you go into the faculty meeting. You don’t have to talk to every member of your faculty. Random sampling actually works. Try to

talk with a range of colleagues and ask them what they think about joining FAIR. Use those conversations to discuss your colleague's concerns in an individualized setting, as well as to prepare a list of the questions you'll probably have to answer at the faculty meeting.

Faculties at 16 of schools voted last year to join FAIR as a faculty, and another 8 joined as an institution. Some of the same questions and concerns have surfaced at each school. The Solomon website includes a [FAQ document](#) (Frequently Asked Questions) based on questions raised at some faculty meetings. You can use that document as a beginning template and then fill in the unique concerns that may arise at your school.

6. Be prepared for the faculty meeting.

Every law school has its own dynamic at faculty meetings and you know yours the best. But it's always helpful to have a number of faculty persons ready to speak at the meeting in favor of joining FAIR. In addition, be sure you have copies of any documents that your colleagues may want to talk about – e.g., FAIR's bylaws, the legal claims made in *FAIR v. Rumsfeld*, the Solomon Amendment language and regulations, the AALS requirement of amelioration. All of these documents (and more) are available on www.solomonresponse.org.

7. Be firm, but respectful.

However the vote turns out at your school, you all have to live with each other afterwards. A basic principle of lobbying and persuasion is the following: listen respectfully when people voice opinions different from your own; try to deconstruct *why* they are holding that point of view (i.e., be curious, not defensive); and then respectfully, but firmly, explain your contrary point of view.

We hope you are successful in your effort. If you are, please send an email to Kent Greenfield at kent.greenfield@bc.edu and to Chai Feldblum at feldblum@law.georgetown.edu.

Thanks!